

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium attenuated by a non-reverting mutation in each of the *aroC* gene, the *ompF* gene and the *ompC* gene.

Claims 2-4 (canceled)

5. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 1 which is a strain of enterotoxigenic *E. coli* (ETEC).

6. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 1 which is further attenuated by a mutation in a fourth gene.

7. (currently amended) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 6 wherein the fourth gene is selected from the group consisting of *aroA*, *aroD*, *aroS*, *pur*, *htrA*, *galE*, *cya*, *crp*, *phoP* and [[or]] *surA*.

8. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 1, wherein the mutation in each gene is a defined mutation.

9. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 1, wherein the mutation in each gene is deletion of the entire coding sequence.

10. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 1 which has been genetically engineered to express a heterologous antigen.

11. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 10, wherein expression of the antigen is driven by the *nlrB* promoter or the *htrA* promoter.

12. (withdrawn) A vaccine comprising an *Escherichia coli* bacterium as defined in claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.

Claims 13-15 (canceled)

16. (withdrawn) A method of raising an immune response in a mammalian host, which comprises administering to the host an *Escherichia coli* bacterium as defined in claim 1.

17. (previously presented) An *Escherichia coli* bacterium according to claim 1 which is PTL003 deposited on September 3, 2001 under accession number 01090302 with the European Collection of Cell Cultures (ECACC).